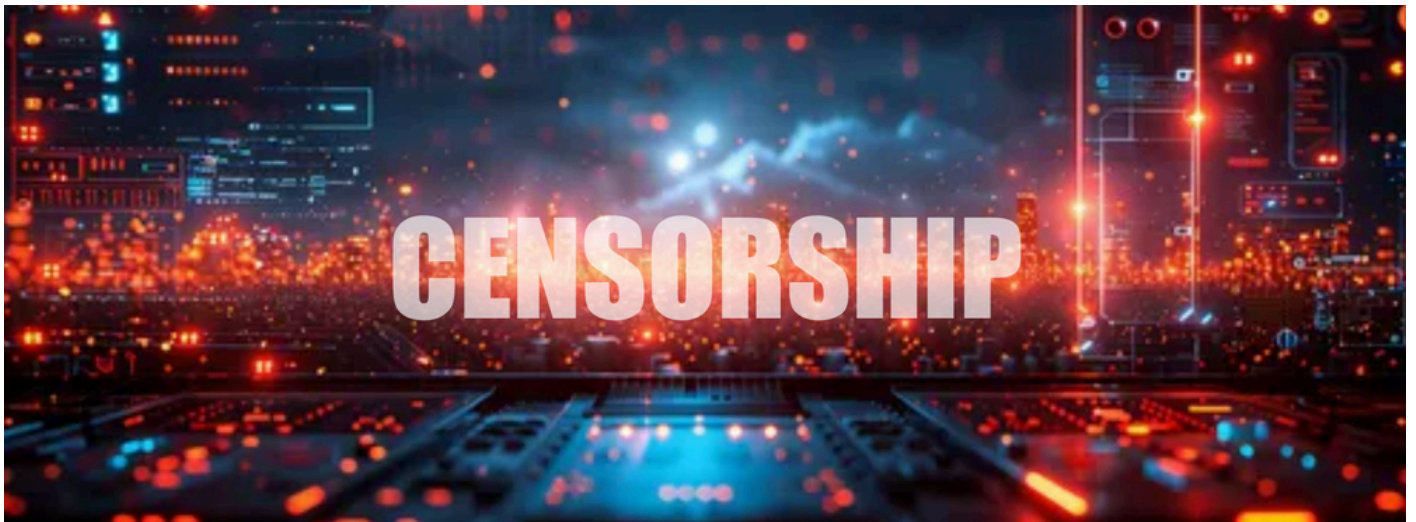


The Stranglehold of Censorship



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With Artificial Intelligence we have finally arrived in a world of 24/7 censorship, a place where thought itself can be molded, where whole societies can be pushed and pulled like taffy in any direction or shape desired. If you doubt that this is occurring it is only because you are unaware of the influence, not because it doesn't exist. Much of what you see and hear through electronic devices can be and is carefully crafted to a predetermined end.

AI machine learning can control narratives online in real time by dialing viral messages up or down. AI algorithms can scan and ban tens of millions of keywords in posts, shutting down or boosting narratives. AI tools can shape thought and action.

Mike Benz so aptly calls them weapons of mass deletion. Not some happenstance of tech evolution, these tools were developed by DARPA to take on ISIS and are utilized by the CIA, DHS, DoD, and State Department in what Benz calls the copyright industrial complex. An entire malinformation cottage industry has grown into a sprawling beast woven throughout government agencies and third-party NGO 'researchers' like EIP, the Orwellian-named Election Integrity Partnership. Fed by government grants and donor dollars, these weapons of censorship are now trained on us. Google controls everything you are shown.

State Department officials lobbied their counterparts in Europe to pass hate speech censorship laws that would boomerang back onto the U.S. A vague 2017 German law turned private social media companies into overzealous censors, with no judicial oversight or right to appeal. In 2022 the EU censorship law called the Digital Services Act created a frenzy of self-censorship by adding steep penalties for disinformation on platforms, all adjudicated by the government.

The UK has overtly criminalized "dangerous" thoughts and speech with fines and jail time penalties. The Public Order Act of 1986 makes it an offense for a person to use "threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, another person harassment, alarm or distress." You can't get much more vague and opinion-based than that. Who judges which ideas or speech are crimes? The police who investigate, and the Crown Prosecution Service. No chance that could be politicized or abused. The debate now is whether something said privately in one's home should be criminalized. That *anyone* thinks that's a good idea is frightening.

Canada defines hate crime as speech or writing that "is likely to expose a person or group or class of persons to hatred or contempt." The law paradoxically states it is not to "interfere with the free expression of any opinion on any subject." How you parse that is anyone's guess. A pre-crime law called the Online Harms Act in Canada would allow the arrest and detention of people who *might* commit a *future* hate crime.

When it comes to censorship, vagueness is the point. Chilling free speech merely requires creating doubt in the speaker's mind as to what he may or may not say. Any good totalitarian knows the most effective and complete censorship program is self-censorship.

When a population has built its own cage of tacit taboos, the jailers can relax. Many a long-term prisoner, upon seeing an open door to freedom, would simply ignore it. Others released after years of incarceration are so uncomfortable with freedom that they will commit a crime just to get back into prison. Self-censorship is no different. Go along to get along is nothing less than the defeat of free will.

At the height of East German oppression, the domestic state police infamously known as the Stasi recruited or coerced hundreds of thousands of citizens to spy on each other and report any perceived criticisms to the government. Seems we are heading in that same direction. A recent Washington State law installed a hate speech hotline, where citizens can inform on each other for uttering anything construed as hate speech.

One major tool of censorship is the manipulation of words. For centuries, “illegal alien” was the legal term for a non-citizen who entered a country illegally. Designating this as somehow offensive whittled it down to “undocumented migrant” and finally “newcomer.” “Illegal alien” becomes taboo speech effectively prohibiting any sensible discussion on the millions of “newcomers” pouring across the border. Irreversible transgender surgery done on an otherwise healthy person is called “life-saving health care,” even though it is neither life-saving nor health care in any factual sense.

Many censorship efforts begin as Trojan horses. In the late 70s, after major abuses by federal intelligence and police branches were exposed, the slick IC operators convinced Congress to pass a new law to rein in abuses. FISA, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, was born. Now we have continuous massive perennial abuses of U.S. citizens’ Fourth Amendment protections all done through a secret FISA court with virtually no effective oversight. Who would have thought?

When 9/11 shocked the nation public patriotism hit a fever pitch. We got the ironically named Patriot Act, a law that smashed through constitutional protections like a tank through rice paper. Instead of protecting America from the evils of foreign terrorism, it created new intelligence agencies and posts, and consolidated power into the hands of un-elected bureaucrats dedicated to surveillance.

Over concerns about TikTok and Chinese 'influence' here in America came the new Restrict Act law with broad bipartisan support (always a red flag). It gives broad power to the president to censor media platforms. Once again, the cries of protecting America are likely to drown out the obvious concerns for government censorship and abuse.

How far are we along the slippery slope to government censorship? The woke cancel culture has certainly taken a toll. Jobs lost and careers ruined over a careless and often innocent turn of phrase. A recent CBS news article reported with a straight face that the First Amendment protects your free speech as long as you don't cause alarm to the intelligence community. I don't recall the IC exception clause in the First Amendment. In 2018, 40% of people surveyed could not name a First Amendment right, and 50% of college students think speech should be censored to avoid offending anyone.

We all know the CCP and all good totalitarians would like to censor and control America. So what do we do? We suppress Americans first. Sometimes I think our foreign policy is, if you can't beat them, be them. That would explain the spying, false propaganda, censoring, assassinations, and the overthrowing of governments done by our own. As Senator Rand Paul said, "Emulating Chinese communists is not the best way to combat Chinese communists."

What could be called healthy censorship exists in every society. Whenever someone persistently says untrue things, people take note and stop listening. This is the organic result of free will. Whenever someone speaks abrasively or hatefully too often, others avoid their company. They either learn from the experience and change their ways or become rather lonely. Again, this is organic. This is not judged by the government, or by a government proxy, and certainly should never be enforced or punished by either. One should never be judged and banned by a bank or canceled from social media platforms. If someone is disliked enough, individuals can simply cease following them, or even block them altogether. Like the company that delivers an inferior product, eventually, no one buys what they are selling.

This is how free societies handle bad actors. Note that in the free society you may speak badly if you wish, but others may refuse to listen as well. They may even

disagree. This is the basis and strength of the First Amendment. As soon as the government enters into any control of the speech arena, no matter what you think or how you rationalize it, you are staring down the loaded barrel of censorship.

Image: [Source](#) [Edited]

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